BSMV Black Studies
Mrs. Kelley

AFRO-AMERICAN STUDIES IN THE REGULAR MIDDLEBURY CURRICULUM

A considerable amount of material relevant to the general field of Afro-American studies and the study of Blacks in the United States exists in the current Middlebury curriculum. The following is a list of departments and relevant courses within the department. The material is excerpted from replies received by the office of the Dean of the College from the respective departmental chairmen.

Because in many cases, study opportunities are broader than any course description could indicate (through independent study projects, and so forth), the rather informal language of the actual replies has been retained rather than attempting to squeeze all the material into a single format. In some cases it will be noted that faculty describe what they did last year and indicate what they may do during the current year. Any student contemplating registering for these courses should consult the instructor if there is any doubt.

There are a few departments which did not have an opportunity to survey their department prior to publication of this document. When the information is received from these departments, this list will be up-dated and expanded.

The courses listed do not include relevant material which may be available in the Winter Term curriculum.

Office of the Dean of the College
September, 1969

AMERICAN LITERATURE

AL 301 (The American Novel)

For the past few years, Ralph Ellison's Invisible Man has been a standard part of the syllabus. Another year, I plan to include Richard Wright's Native Son also.

AL 407 (American Biography)

James Baldwin's Notes of a Native Son has been on the syllabus for several years. Next year I will also include The Autobiography of Malcolm X. In the past I have assigned a term paper on the autobiographies of Booker T. Washington and Frederick Douglass. This could be done again with the same or a different combination of Black autobiographies were there sufficient interest.

Professor Beck informs me that in his Folklore and Mythology course (AL 412) he talks about Negro folklore in America and Africa and in his Winter Term Ballads course, which he plans to offer next year, he will take up Negro folk songs and the blues not only in America but in the West Indies and in Africa. "As a folklorist," he says, "minority groups, folk groups and primitive societies have always interested me greatly." In his American Literature and Short Story courses he discusses the way the Negro figures in the work of such white writers as Joel Chandler Harris, George Washington Cable, Mark Twain, Katherine Ann Porter, Eudora Welty, William Faulkner and others.

ECONOMICS

EC 402 (The Economics of Development)

Development discusses the peculiarities of non-western cultures and civilizations as it pertains to development potential. Africa and Africans are discussed as one of the various "underdeveloped" areas along with other areas of the globe.

The questions relating to the integration of "non-western civilizations" into the mainstream of essentially "western" modern economics are discussed, as well as the rationale, or what is known as "the moral basis" of the so-called "underdeveloped" areas of the world.

EC 404 (Labor Problems)

Our Labor Economics attention is given to employment problems of minorities - in unions and in the economy at large. The coauthor of this year's labor textbook, Professor Ray Marshall, is an authority on Black Americans and their acceptance or non-acceptance by American unions.

FINE ARTS

FA 308 (The Will to Abstraction)

This is a comparative study of abstraction as seen in 20th century art, Byzantine art, early Medieval art in the west and African art.

GEOGRAPHY

GG 314 (Geography of Africa)

The most relevant course within the Department of Geography to Afro-American studies, this course focuses on the diversity of the African continent and on the social, economic and political problems of development. Students are assigned readings in professional journals dealing with these problems and are encouraged to become familiar with such regionally-oriented periodicals as African Report and Africa Today.

In addition, Africa is the subject of discussion in approximately 25% of the lectures in GG 101 and 102 (World Regional Geography and examples from Africa are frequently cited in Economic Geography and Political Geography. The changing distribution of the Negro and the urban crisis in the United States are considered in the course GG 311 (Geography of Anglo-America).

HISTORY

Below is a list of the work we offer in this field. We have at present seven staff members. One is a specialist in African History: his field is more specifically the formerly German parts of Africa. His predecessor specialized in the French areas. He is on leave this year for further research, and the college paid for him to go to Africa last summer. Another staff member has been encouraged, although he is a specialist in the area of the American Revolution, to work with U. S. minority groups, and he will for the first time be offering a course in this field next fall, as he offered one in American Negro History during the past Winter term.

Our course offerings in the field for next year will be the following:

HI 205 & 206 (The Middle East and Africa - An Historical Study)

The stress is overwhelmingly on Africa rather than the Middle East. There is a study of traditional African society south of the Sahara, and the growth of Islamic culture in the first semester. In the second, the growth of European influence is shown, with a good deal of emphasis on the de-colonization process and the problems of building new nations. This course is given every year, and consists of lectures and discussions, roughly at the sophomore-junior level.

HI 307 (Blacks and Immigrants: Race and Nationality in U. S. History)

A brand new course, taught at present for fall term only, dealing not only with Blacks but with minority ethnic groups in general. There will be more stress on Blacks, though, than on any other single group. Students will be encouraged to pick the group they wish to deal with, and the professor encourages individual work. Two lectures a week, plus individual conferences. It is taught also at the sophomore-junior level.

HI 415 (Pro-seminar in the Age of Imperialism)

This is part of the regular departmental program of pro-seminars, of which we offer about four each fall. All junior majors must take one, but others are encouraged also, provided there is room. This seminar usually alternates between being taught by our African historian and our Asian historian. This next year it will be by the African. The chief purpose of this, like all pro-seminars in History, is to help the students learn how to write a respectably long research paper.

HI 425 (The Literature of History)

This is taught in four sections: U. S.; Europe; Asia; and Africa. The African section will be taught in spring. It is the complement to the pro-seminars, and like them, it is required of junior majors. It stresses bibliography, and a student who has completed the African section should have a mastery of at least the important works in the field by the time he finishes.

HI 700 (Thesis and Comprehensive)

African History is obviously a prime field for theses, and we have been stretching our resources for several years to build up our library collection in African History. The library has about 1,250 books in the African and Afro-American fields at present. We have eighteen journals in the field. Our comprehensives are in four fields: U. S., Europe, Asia, and Africa; and the students may choose any two of these fields. Many choose Africa. It is possible for a student with really strong interest in Afro-American studies to choose for his two fields U. S. History, with an interest in minority groups, and Africa, which should give him a fairly firm background in these two fields, either for graduate work (there are six or seven top graduate schools in the country in this field) or for development on his own.

POLITICAL SCIENCE

PS 102 (American Government)

Are Negroes of African descent first and foremost Americans or Blacks? From the point of view of American government the question may be stated as follows: "Is a political community among the different races in America possible on the principles of the Declaration of Independence?" After a two-week examination of The Negro and the Constitution: A New Birth of Freedom, students in American government wrote a five-hundred word essay on that topic. The assigned readings included speeches of Lincoln, the Plessy and Brown Supreme Court cases, Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, and other interpretative essays. The theme of the course is the American political regime; the above-mentioned topic and material is included in the course because Lincoln's intention, described by one writer as the emancipation of the American Republic from the curse of slavery, "a curse which lay upon both races and which in different ways enslaved them both," must remain ours as well.

PS 202 (Contemporary International Politics)

The course includes two weeks spent on the politics of the developing nations. This is not limited to sub-Saharan Africa but covers foreign policy positions common to all non-aligned nations in the third world. Recommended readings include material dealing specifically with sub-Saharan politics, but within the necessary time limitations of a survey course.

PS 402 (American Foreign Policy)

The course considers American foreign policy toward the third world, including sub-Saharan Africa.

PS 314 (The Politics of Developing Areas)

In this course, which is a study of the political processes and structures of the developing nations, I do make references to sub-Saharan Africa in lectures and also assign readings on several African political systems. (Furthermore, I permit students to write their term papers on the area or countries of their choice.)

SOCIOLOGY-ANTHROPOLOGY

SA 366 (Majority-Minority Relations)

Focus on the causes, purposes, and consequences of prejudice, discrimination, and segregation, especially as they are manifested in various institutional contexts. Problems of self-conception, adjustment patterns, social movements and black power, community organization, and styles of life. Special emphasis on the Negro American. (SA 101, SA 102, or permission). (Offered in alternate years).